



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE
10 W. JACKSON BLVD.
CHICAGO, IL 60604

NEWS RELEASE

Friday, March 16, 2001

Sixteen Sentenced in a Marriage Fraud Scheme

Chicago, IL – Brian R. Perryman, District Director for the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in Chicago, together with Scott R. Lassar, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, announced the sentencing yesterday of 16 individuals involved in a marriage fraud scheme.

Juanita Zamora, 54, of North Chicago, was the leader of a fraud scheme in which she conspired to arrange sham marriages for foreign nationals from Central America and Mexico so that they could obtain legal permanent residency in the United States. Zamora was sentenced to 4 years in prison with 3 years supervision and was fined \$2,000 by the Honorable Suzanne Conlon. The supervisor of these sham marriages, Maritza Burgos, received 5 months in prison along with home confinement; while the remaining 14 sentenced yesterday received either probation or home confinement and, in some cases, a fine ranging from \$500 to \$1,000.

Zamora arranged marriages in Lake, McHenry, DuPage and Cook counties in Illinois and Kenosha and Racine counties in Wisconsin. Foreign nationals were charged at least \$1,500 by Zamora to arrange a marriage and obtain permanent resident status.

“It is against the law to defraud the United States government to obtain legal status,” said Brian R. Perryman. “This sentencing is a clear example that the INS is looking closely at marriage fraud and will continue to do so.”

The Service will initiate removal proceedings where appropriate in the near future.

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